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Overcoming Negative Perceptions through an Effective Communication Plan

Amanda M. Blau

Sponsor: Regina Bell, Communication Studies

It is impossible not to communicate, but the importance of communication is easily overlooked. In her book, *“Communication in Our Lives,”* Julia T. Wood, a communication expert, says, “From birth to death, communication shapes our personal, professional, and social lives as well as the culture in which we live.” The ability to communicate effectively is necessary to implement the ideas and visions of an organization. This ongoing need is apparent in successful organizations but also applies to school districts, whose audiences extend outside the classroom and beyond the playground perimeter. In my role as a school committee member, I have experienced firsthand how superfluous problems arise in the absence of an effective communications plan.

The Chariho Regional School District lacks an organized communications strategy and consistently struggles to reach all audiences given its limited resources. After consulting with the district’s superintendent on numerous occasions, we agreed to embark upon a collaborative effort to influence the current perceptions associated with communication efforts facilitated by the School District. At the same time, the effort will create a unique opportunity for me to effectively utilize skills specific to analysis, communication and public relations to create an open communication plan within the Chariho community.

The goal of the plan would be to improve the district’s current communications strategies, as well as explore new media platforms, in an effort to increase awareness of the district’s accomplishments. Secondly, the plan will alter any negative perceptions within the community by providing timely information to a varied audience. When completed, the school district will have a communications plan that can be easily implemented and adapted by the administration.

This project is a culmination of my undergraduate education and an opportunity to use what I have learned to make a positive impact on the school district.